

# Wu Style Tai Chi

Among the five officially recognized Tai Chi Chuan styles in China, Wu Tai Chi Chuan is the second largest style in the world. In Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, Wu style is the most practiced of the Tai Chi Chuan's. Historically in China, the Wu Style has always been recognized and respected equally with the Yang style. Wu style is both an exercise for health and an effective martial art that can be used for self-defense. It effectively moves, exercises and conditions the muscles, joints, and ligaments of the entire body. It is a practice that is easily incorporated into everyday life. It can be practiced almost anywhere at any time. Most importantly, Wu style is enriched life. It facilitates the evolution of the entire person in a gentle and profound way. The idea that the Wu style is good for yielding and softly diverting and that Yang is good for press and discharging comes from the students of the two great masters. One can easily see how Yang Tai Chi is good for press and discharging because Master Yang Cheng Fu was a man weighing 300 pounds. Students who pushed hands with him easily were bounced off by the slight touch of the Master's press. Conversely, Master Wu was a very gentle-natured instructor. When he pushed with his students, all he did was disperse the student's force so he would not unknowingly hurt the students or their feelings. The two masters respected each other's Kung Fu skills as equals when they demonstrated their prowess at public charity occasions. The idea that the two forms had different relative strengths was proven false at the first demonstration of the two masters in Shanghai. On that occasion, the masters demonstrated the highest skill of push hands by seeking each other's internal force by asking and answering without giving any slack. After an engagement of advances and encounters, the two masters would smile in recognition of each other's proficiency. The match was serious push hands carried out with respect for each other, each master doing his best to find the other's flaw without showing any favoritism for press and push or roll back and yield. This story shows there are truly no differences between softly diverting and discharging. The problem lies in not understanding that within softness there is hardness and within hardness there is softness. This is Tai Chi's Yin and Yang principle. Wu's Tai Chi will undoubtedly give you a new perspective and appreciation for your body - its strengths and uniqueness. It will also help you to understand your own unique personality and energy if you will let it. As you begin, remember that patience, persistence, dedication, and appreciation in the learning process produce miraculous results. The practice of Wu style Tai Chi Chuan can moves you - outwardly and inwardly - onward to new discoveries.